

Making the Most of a Municipal Energy Audit Webinar

January 5, 2011

Questions and Answers

Program Administrator & Cost Questions

Q: Who is the Program Administrator exactly?

A: The Energy Efficiency Program Administrators are the investor-owned electric and gas utilities and the municipal aggregators. These include National Grid, NStar, Western Massachusetts Electric, Unitil, Cape Light Compact, Columbia Gas, Berkshire Gas and New England Gas. Your contact at these companies should be your account representative(s). You may also contact the Program Administrators through the Mass Save website (www.masssave.com) or their 800 number (1-800-666-3303).

Q: How do we know who our Program Administrator is? Do we contact our electric or gas representative or both?

A: See above for the Energy Efficiency Program Administrators. If you have both electric and gas Program Administrators, you should contact representatives from both companies. The electric and gas Program Administrators work closely together to collaborate and bring the most comprehensive energy services to their customers.

Q: Who does a town contact if they are awaiting a water/wastewater audit?

A: A collaborative effort between DOER, MassDEP and EPA is underway to address energy use by the drinking and wastewater sector. The primary contacts for this initiative are Michael DiBara at MassDEP (Michael.DiBara@state.ma.us) and Aimee Powelka (Aimee.Powelka@state.ma.us). You should also contact your Program Administrator(s).

Q: who is primary contact person if a town is waiting for results of audit? DOER or Program Administrators?

A: If an audit is being performed because of an application to the EAP, please contact Aimee Powelka (Aimee.Powelka@state.ma.us). Otherwise, please contact your Program Administrator(s) through your account representative(s).

Q: Is there a cost for audits by investor owned utilities, as there are not free ones from the state?

A: The financial costs of energy assessments provided by the Program Administrators depend upon the type and level of audit services. Some audits, such as the Direct Install program, are provided free of charge. These are simplified audits that look at easily implemented measures, such as lighting. Higher levels of service, such as the Whole Building Assessment program, typically involve a cost-share but are much more comprehensive. The costs of the audit, and the associated incentives offered for implementation of energy efficiency measures, can vary depending upon the needs of the community and the complexity of the building(s).

DOER Audits and Energy Audit Program (EAP) Questions

Q: Will DOER be providing any more free audits? Can you sign up for the free DOER audits?

A: DOER is no longer accepting applications for the Energy Audit Program; however we remain committed to working with the Energy Efficiency Program Administrators to serve all former applicants. Going forward, communities should contact their Program Administrator(s) through their account representative(s) in order to request energy assessment services and information regarding incentives for implementation of energy efficiency measures. Communities with a Municipal Light Plant should contact their plant directly.

Q: What is the status for the EAP program for those that signed up over a year ago? Is this being replaced by the "Program Administrators"?

A: DOER has transitioned responsibility for the energy audits to the Program Administrators; however it remains committed to working with EAP applicants to ensure that they receive audit services. DOER continues to manage the queue, be the point of contact for applicants, and coordinate with the Program Administrators and to attend the audit meetings with communities.

Q: What level of audit is being provided through the EAP? Walk-through or Whole Building?

A: The towns that applied to the Energy Audit Program and are still waiting for their energy assessment will receive a level of service that depends upon many variables, including the types and amounts of fuel they use, the complexity of their buildings and their community's needs. Any financial charges depend upon the type of audit services. Typically, the applicants to the Energy Audit Program have been receiving a more generous level of service than would otherwise occur.

Q: What is the timeline for communities on the waiting list to receive their free audit from DOER?

A: This depends upon the number of the community in the queue, based upon their application date, and upon their electric Program Administrator.

Q: Our town has signed up for the state sponsored audit, but has not received its audit yet. Should I directly contact my utility to get one?

A: DOER recommends contacting Aimee Powelka (Aimee.Powelka@state.ma.us) in order to check on your town's status in the queue. We also recommend contacting your utility account representative(s) to inform them of your wait status on the EAP list and your continued interest in receiving energy assessment services.

Other Questions

Q: Does Green Communities have a mechanism to help communities maximize Mass Save Audits for Residential Audits?

A: Currently, Green Communities does not have a mechanism to help communities employ Mass Save for their residents; however it is something we are investigating as a service to our designated Green Communities.

Q: What is the status of a statewide contract for performance contract consultants or owner's agents to assist towns in creating performance contracts?

A: Currently, the committee negotiating the statewide contract for energy-related services is reviewing applications in order to select the preferred vendors.

Q: Does DOER track the relationship between cost and savings projected in audits and the actual cost and savings incurred when the community implements the projects?

A: DOER is in the beginning stages of compiling and analyzing this data. Currently, we have the data available from audit reports shared by a community and/or its Program Administrators. It is much more challenging to collect actual cost and savings data. DOER would be interested in working with communities willing to share this type of data.